

Sweet Briar College Farm Makes History with Gold Medal-Winning Rosé

SBC Farm's Earned the Rosé wins gold at the 2025 Virginia Governor's Cup, marking a historic first entry and celebrating the College's agricultural excellence.

AMHERST, VA, UNITED STATES, February 24, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Sweet Briar College Farm made history today: the 2023 Earned the Rosé earned a gold medal in the [Commonwealth of Virginia Governor's Cup 2025 wine competition](#). This is the College's first time entering.

Judging for the Governor's Cup is rigorous. In the preliminary round, each wine is tasted in a single-blind tasting by six judges over the course of three days, meaning judges know the grape or category of wine, but the

vintage, winery, and name are hidden from them. Once the preliminary round of judging is complete, 12 judges assess the highest-ranking wines from the preliminary round. Each judge samples all of the final round wines, and each wine receives a final score. Wines that earn gold medals receive final scores of 90-100 and are deemed "outstanding." Recipients of the gold medal in the competition are included in the Virginia Gold Medal Wine Trail, which launches in March.

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President Mary Pope M. Hutson

Sweet Briar's wines are crafted from grapes grown in nearly 18 acres of vineyard tracts in two separate locations on the College's campus. The vineyards include merlot,

chardonnay, cabernet sauvignon, and cabernet franc grapes. The gold medal wine, Earned the Rosé, was formulated from merlot grapes from Sweet Briar's vineyard. Sweet Briar College Farm



Sweet Briar College Farm's Rosé wine earned Gold

entered two other wines in the Governor's Cup competition, the 2023 Leading the Way Chardonnay and 2023 Meadow Merlot; both earned silver medals, also significant achievements.

"We are incredibly honored to receive this distinction for our wine and our college farm. We are fortunate to be part of the Commonwealth's legacy of excellence in agriculture," said President Mary Pope M. Hutson. "Sweet Briar College prepares our students to leverage opportunities for academic innovation and sustainability on our campus, community, and beyond. Students can take courses or participate in our [Willits Food Systems Fellows Program](#) and gain hands-on experience in activities that range from pruning the vines to representative grape sampling and even bottling the wines."

"We have named our wines to honor and celebrate Sweet Briar College's traditions, academic excellence, and sustainability initiatives," noted Professor Lisa Powell, Ph.D., who leads our agriculture and sustainability programs. "As every alumna knows, SBC's motto is 'she who earns the rose may bear it,' which led naturally to a name for the rosé. Leading the Way Chardonnay celebrates our women's leadership core curriculum and history of preparing our students for leadership roles after graduation, and Meadow Merlot honors the College's conservation and stewardship efforts, as those grapes were grown in a tract overlooking our field of wildflowers providing forage for pollinators."

Sweet Briar College Farm's wines are made in collaboration with Michael Shaps Wineworks and bottled in Charlottesville, Va.

Sweet Briar College's mission is to challenge and inspire women, forging ethical leaders with the skill, compassion, and vision to create a more just and sustainable world.



18 acres of vineyard tracts in two separate locations on the College's campus



Apiary overlooking our field of wildflowers providing forage for pollinators

Sweet Briar College Farm, LLC is the agricultural entity of Sweet Briar College responsible for wholesale produce, honey production, and winemaking and is led by John Thomas, Director of Physical Plant & Project Management, Peter Bryan, Vice President for Administration and Chief Operating Officer, and Professor Lisa Powell. To stay updated on all of [Sweet Briar College Farm's agricultural products and projects](#) and find information about purchasing wines, visit sbc.edu/farm.

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Sweet Briar College: Where Bold Women Thrive, nestled in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, is more than just a campus—it's a launchpad for fearless leaders, innovators, and changemakers.

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